



NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OR
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION TRAINEE

- Are you passionate about making a difference to the Great Barrier Reef?
- Are you passionate about Agriculture?
- Are you looking to widen your industry experience?

This is your opportunity to be mentored by experienced extension practitioners to develop the skills required to engage with primary producers and improve land management practices throughout the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) catchments.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

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|--------------------------|---|---|
| Program | Agricultural Extension Work Placement Program | |
| Position Title | Agricultural Extension Trainee | |
| Salary | Salary Package of \$64,600 (including salary, superannuation and leave loading) | |
| Incumbent | This position is full time commencing on 1 May, 2019, ceasing on 30 April, 2020 (12 months duration only) | |
| Location | Plane Creek Productivity Services Limited, Sarina | |
| Reports To | The Manager – Peter Albertson | |
| Key Relationships | Internal: | Mentors, Consortium Organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peter Albertson (Principal Mentor: PCPSL)• Michael Boland (Deputy Mentor: Reef Catchments)• Audra Allen (Deputy Mentor: MAPS)• Carol Norris (Deputy Mentor: SRA) |
| | External: | Landholders, other Trainees, Queensland Farmers' Federation, other PCPSL extension staff |

Position Summary:

The Queensland Government engaged the Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) to facilitate the Agricultural Work Placement Program, which aims to improve the capacity of up to six early career extension officers (Trainees) by enhancing their skills in delivering agricultural and Natural Resource Management (NRM) projects with landholders in Great Barrier Reef (GBR) catchments.

The program was developed in response to the third recommendation of the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce report that calls for more effective, targeted and coordinated extension to support large scale land management practice changes in the GBR Catchments.

The focus is on reducing the risk of excess nutrients, pesticides and sediments from agricultural runoff impacting reef water quality in the GBR catchments. The major agricultural activities in the Great Barrier Reef catchments include sugarcane, grazing, bananas, horticulture, grains and dairy.

The successful applicant will be hosted by Plane Creek Productivity Services Limited (PCPSL) and receive mentoring from experienced advisors, participate in relevant training, engage with sugarcane growers and expand their access to extension networks. It is anticipated that the Trainee will develop expertise in one or more of the following areas: land management, water quality, soil health, and nutrient and pest management.

Host Organisation and Work Location:

PCPSL is a Productivity Service Provider to the Sugar Industry in Plane Creek, Sarina, QLD. It is one of three Productivity Services in the Central Cane Growing Region, from Plane Creek in the South, Mackay and Proserpine to the North.

PCPSL has approximately 160 registered farmers growing approximately 1.2 M tonnes of cane per year, which is approx. ¼ of the total production in the Central Region. Although only a small team of staff, PCPSL provides its growers with agronomic advice to improve grower's productivity.

Over the past 10 years, PCPSL has successfully applied to conduct projects such as Reef Rescue 1&2, Reef Trust 3, Irrigation Futures and Best Management Practices (BMP). All have a focus on either water quality or improving irrigation water use efficiency. Assisting irrigation scheduling, PCPSL has been at the forefront by establishing moisture probes throughout Plane Creek. The Moisture probes measure soil moisture and transfer the data via the Internet for growers to review. Other telemetry planned by PCPSL for Plane Creek, is releasing feral pig trap doors using a mobile App remotely when notified by imagery of pigs present within the trap.

Part of the core duties of PCPSL is to provide its growers with: Clean seed from Distribution Plots; place Tissue Culture orders through SRA; plant inspections; Ratoon Stunting Disease sample collection; soil sampling for *Pachymetra* and Nematode counts; planting propagation material; advising growers on nutrient recommendations; distribution of shared equipment throughout the Plane Creek District; establishing moisture probe telemetry equipment in the field etc.

The PCPSL host application is a consortium of four groups: PCPSL, Mackay Agricultural Productivity Services (MAPS), Sugar Research Australia (SRA) and Reef Catchments. These are four major industry groups within the Central Cane Growing Region. Each group have their own expertise and are able to provide training second to none within the sugar industry. PCPSL has been actively involved in providing agronomic advice to growers through BMP and the Reef Programs (Reef Trust and Reef Rescue) which have significant reef related outcomes. Reduced tillage practices and fertiliser applications combined with improving fertiliser placement are just a few of the practice changes the graduate trainee will be involved in. Similarly, newly funded water quality projects in the Rocky Dam Catchment Area have been funded through the Sustainable Farmers Group in Koumala. PCPSL is linked into this project to assist in disseminating the water quality testing (nutrient and pesticides) beyond the few initial growers. The timing of this involvement by PCPSL will coincide with the graduate trainee starting work and they will therefore be involved from the ground level.

The training and experience provided by the consortium groups will provide the necessary skills required to conduct the core activities at PCPSL and provide a broad knowledge of the sugar industry to the graduate.

Trainee Role & Responsibilities:

The successful applicant will work with a host organisation to support landholders with land management practices that improve the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef.

The NRM or Agricultural Extension Trainee will:

- Increase their capacity to deliver Agriculture extension by working with landholders to facilitate change on their property that has social, productivity and environmental outcomes. This is achieved by helping people gain the knowledge and confidence required for practice change and providing support to ensure it is implemented effectively.
- Work with the PCPSL and their mentors to develop and implement a 12 month work program that supports landholders to adopt practices that improve water quality. This work program will need to be approved by both PCPSL and QFF.
- Actively contribute to the design and delivery of their program, as well as to the design and delivery of extension activities under the guidance of their mentor.
- Complete a skills needs assessment. This will allow for activities specified in the work program to be tailored to the Trainee's needs.
- Attend designated training programs.
- Demonstrate skill development to the satisfaction of their mentor and meet agreed performance standards.
- Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan to proactively engage with internal and external stakeholders and create their own networks throughout the year.
- Undertake evaluation activities and participate in a public forum to report on outcomes of the program.
- Actively participate and potentially present at Reef events and other forums as requested.

Trainees will be required to attend all training activities as per agreed work program, including:

- The induction workshop (to take place within the first two weeks of commencement).
- The Australasia Pacific Extension Network (APEN) to be held in 2019.
- A bus trip to expose the trainee to different extension practices.
- The mid-year review workshop.
- The final evaluation event.
- Complete selected University of Melbourne training modules for advisors or similar formal training activities.

Eligibility Criteria:

Essential

To be eligible as a Trainee, candidates must:

1. Be a citizen or permanent resident of Australia
2. Hold a 'Class C' Queensland driver's license
3. Have completed studies in Agriculture, Science or Environment (minimum Certificate IV)
4. Be at the beginning of your career or a new entrant to the extension field with no more than two years of experience in extension or advisory services
5. Be willing to work with any host organisation in any GBR Catchment. Applicants can indicate a preference to work in a particular area or with a specific commodity, however there is no

guarantee that the request will be fulfilled. It will be the Trainee's responsibility to organise relocation to the host organisation's office at their own cost.

6. Be able to commence work no later than 1st May, 2019
7. Be able and willing to travel throughout a region and the GBR Catchments as part of their work. This may include multiple days away at a time.
8. Actively participate in specified training and demonstrate competency in agreed key performance indicators
9. Demonstrate capacity to work independently within a team environment
10. High-level verbal communication skills and demonstrated networking skills

Desirable

1. Demonstrated training in fields valuable to deliver Reef health outcomes is desired, such as land management, water quality, soil health, and nutrient and pest management.

QFF and PCPSL supports equal opportunity employment, Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders are encouraged to apply.

Selection Criteria:

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Level of skills and training and personal attributes that could be used to perform the role and improve land management practices. This includes demonstrated successful completion of studies in Agriculture, Science or Environment (minimum Certificate IV), as demonstrated by academic transcripts.
2. Demonstrated high-level communication skills and a strong ability to engage and build networks effectively.
3. Good understanding of the agricultural industry being applied for.
4. Thorough understanding of the importance of agricultural extension officers and the key attributes required to facilitate the improvement of land management practices and achieve improved water quality outcomes in a GBR catchment.

Submitting an Application:

Candidates are asked to submit the following information:

1. Current Curriculum Vitae (CV).
2. A Cover Letter (maximum two pages), or a 3-minute video clip that responds to the selection criteria and summarises why you should be considered for this role.
3. Proof of nationality or a permanent residence visa.
4. Certified copies of your academic record and academic transcript.
5. Two referee reports/letters that support your claims for the position. The references should address the selection criteria used by QFF to evaluate your application.

Please submit the above information to milena@gff.org.au by 5pm, 21 January 2019.

If you are submitting a video, please send a Dropbox link.

No additional information or attachments (such as images, diagrams, flow tables, etc.) should be included unless a prior arrangement has been made with QFF.

Application and Assessment Cycle:

The following sequence outlines the work placement cycle.

| Event | Proposed Date |
|---|----------------------------|
| Call for trainee applications | December 2018-January 2019 |
| Call for applications closes | 21 January 2019 |
| Shortlist applicants notified | February 2019 |
| Interviews of shortlisted applicants | March 2019 |
| Applicants advised of selection outcomes | End of March 2019 |
| Proposed starting date | April/May 2019 |
| Induction workshop completed and work program developed | 15 days after commencement |

These are tentative dates. You will be advised of any changes.

If you are successful PCPSL will contact you to discuss the details of your employment and contract. The details will be aligned to the grant agreement between PCPSL and QFF, according to the provisions of the Deed of Funding Agreement from the Department of Environment and Science (DES).

Further Information:

For any queries related to the Pilot Agricultural Extension Work Placement Program contact Milena Gongora at milena@qff.org.au or phone (07) 3837 4733.

Below you will find some useful links about the project partners and relevant organisations.

[QFF](#)

[DES](#)

[Office of the Great Barrier Reef](#)

[Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance](#)

[Reef Alliance](#)

[PCPSL](#)